

Every month since February 1987 the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced one-hour TV programs on issues related to peace, social justice, economics, the environment, and nonviolence.

The Olympia FOR's program airs several times every week for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for Thurston County's cable TV subscribers. You can see TCTV's schedule at www.tctv.net.

You can also watch the program described below (and more than 90 of our previous interview programs and special programs) at the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org. Simply click the TV programs link to reach www.olympiafor.org/tv_programs.htm, scroll down, and click the program you want to watch.

Many of our website's TV program listings also include a .pdf document describing the program.

APRIL 2011

“SOLDIERS’ WOUNDS: ONE COST OF WAR THAT NEVER ENDS”

by GLEN ANDERSON, PRODUCER AND HOST OF THIS TV SERIES

One of the recurring themes in this TV series is that we **are all interconnected**. No matter what issue we address on one program or another, we find ourselves affirming **our common humanity** – across nations, across social and economic groups, and so forth.

April's TV program takes a fresh look at people who are in the military on active duty – and veterans who have served in the military.

While the peace movement opposes wars and our violent foreign policy, we recognize that the **individuals** who serve or have served in the military are human beings just like ourselves. They are literally our brothers and sisters. Also, some members of the peace movement – like our two guests – have served in the military.

The peace movement recognizes our common humanity with all people who are victims of war. Indeed, many people who serve in the military have also been victimized by war. Just as we want civilians to be healed and restored to peace, so also we want health and peace for all who have served in the military.

It is only fair that GIs and veterans be able to fully exercise their rights related to the benefits for which they are eligible.

This month's TV guests are Dennis Mills and Mark Fleming. Both Dennis and Mark served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era. Both are very active now in the peace movement. Both of our guests are very active with Veterans for Peace Chapter 109, the Rachel Corrie Chapter, in Olympia, Washington, and also very active also with the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Both Dennis and Mark volunteer significant time and effort at the Coffee Strong coffee house south of Tacoma, Washington, where they help active duty GIs and veterans know about

their rights and claim their rightful benefits. Mark has qualified as an “Independent VA Accredited Claims Agent.”

War costs everyone in many ways. The U.S.’s current wars are bankrupting our nation and turning world opinion against us. Wars are costing our nation our principles and our soul.

The Olympia FOR’s April TV program focuses specifically on how war hurts the people who fight – and their families. Despite people’s glib rhetoric that soldiers are “heroes,” the truth is that every combat soldier is wounded in several ways. Our nation must be mature enough to recognize these human costs – and responsible enough to cover the costs. Wars damage the people on **all** sides, and we must take responsibility to heal the people on **all** sides.

Our two guests – Dennis Mills and Mark Fleming – volunteer tremendous amounts of time, skill and effort to help active duty GIs and military veterans protect their rights and get the benefits that they deserve. You can find one or both of them on most Fridays from 10 am to 2 pm at Coffee Strong, 15109 Union Ave SW, Lakewood WA. Take I-5 exit 122, go west, turn right (north) onto Union, and look for Coffee Strong on the right, near a Subway sandwich shop.

You can get more information at:

- **Olympia Veterans for Peace**, Chapter 109: (360) 867-1487 www.vfp109rcc.org
- **Coffee Strong**: 15109 Union Ave SW, Lakewood WA (south of Tacoma) www.coffeestrong.org
- **GI Rights Hotline**: Toll-free 877-447-4487 www.girightshotline.org